(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Circular train through South India

1187. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether representations have been received for running a circular train through South India to boost tourism; and

(b) if so, the action taken to implement the circular train connecting important South India tourist destinations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) and (b)The issue of introducing a tourist train covering the South Indian State capitals was raised in a conference of the South IndianTourism Ministers held on 5th June 2003 at Hyderabad. Thereafter, a meeting of the South Indian Tourism Ministers and the South Indian State Tourism Departments with the Railway officials was scheduled to be held in Hyderabad in September 2003. However the meeting did not take place and there has been no further development in this regard.

Funds for gauge conversion of Nizamabad to Secunderabad

1188. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government have requested the Center to release additional funds of Rs. 50 crores in the budget for 2003-04, for completion of gauge conversion of Nizamabad to Secunderabad from Meter Gauge to Broad Gauge;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) A letter has been received recently from Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh requesting for additional allocation of Rs. 50 crore for the project.

(b) to (d) The work forms a part of Secunderabad-Mudkhed and Jankampet-Bodhan gauge conversion. Mudkhed-Nizamabad and Jankampet-Bodhan sections have been completed and commissioned. Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress on Nizamabad-Malkajgir-Secunderabad section. The outlay provided for the work during 2003-2004 is Rs. 30 crore which is considered adequate keeping in view the activities planned during the current year. The additional requirements of funds would be considered during the budgetary reviews as per the availability of resources.

Railway projects in Bihar

1189. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ongoing projects in Bihar and the progress made till date;

(b) by when the projects are expected to be completed;

(c) the details of expenditure incurred thereon till date, project-wise;

(d) the funds required for completion of the pending projects indicating the amount of cost escalation, the cost of each project from the date of sanction; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government for their expeditious completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) to (c) A Statement is attached (Seebelow).

(d)The pending projects are considered as those projects which had been included in the Budget with the proviso that the work would be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances. No project is pending in the State of Bihar. Perhaps the Hon'ble M.P. is referring to ongoing projects, whose position is given in reply to parts (a) to (c) of question above.

(e) A number of initiatives have been taken to augment resources for expediting completion of the ongoing projects. These include sharing by State Government, Public/Private Partnership, funding from Ministry of Defence and funds for national Rail Vikas Yojana. With these efforts, it may be feasible to expedite the progress of the ongoing projects.